

**Town Hall
Upper Marlboro, Maryland**



Board of Town Commissioners
Steve Sonnett, President
Joe Hourclé, Jim Storey

THE TOWN HALL IS OPEN WEEKDAYS

Monday–Friday: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Contact Town Hall at:
(office) 301-627-6905
(fax) 301-627-2080

(e-mail) info@uppermarlboromd.gov

(cable channel) Verizon 19

OR VISIT US ONLINE AT:

www.uppermarlboromd.gov

Town of Upper Marlboro
14211 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Shred it!

The Town of Upper Marlboro and the Prince George's
Federal Savings Bank are cosponsoring a

Community Shred Day

at the PGFSB parking lot

Saturday, July 17th • 10 a.m. —1 p.m.

3 BOX LIMIT (per person) Please . . .

NO cardboard, metal binders or paper clips

FOR BANK CUSTOMERS AND TOWN RESIDENTS ONLY

Welcome to *Landings* . . .

A monthly newsletter from the Town of Upper Marlboro



Government Review ?

The July 5th edition of the *Washington Post* had a front page article on the upcoming November State ballot question on convening a state constitutional convention. The article states that the Maryland Constitution is about 47,000 words long with 200 amendments, eight times longer than the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The State Constitution, the article argues, is hard for the citizens to understand. Some argue that the State government is working well, thus no change is due. On the other hand, Edward C. Papenfuss, the Maryland State Archivist, is quoted as saying "...People should be concerned about what the Constitution says and what it means....The whole central issue of democracy is paying attention to the body civil, the corporate body of what constitutes our government. And I think one of the problems that we have today is that we do not pay enough attention to the structure of government...or what the framework should be..."

While I am not taking a position on the State ballot question, I do believe that our Town needs to review the structure of the Town's government to insure a smooth continuity of operations.

The Town has had a rich tradition of long serving Town Presidents. That tradition was broken in 2006 and then again in 2008 when the current administration was first elected. In my opinion, the lack of continuity and institutional knowledge between the last two administrations did not serve the Town well. I do not

desire to serve as President when my term ends in January 2012 and I am concerned about the continuity of government operations.

There is very little active participation by the citizens in the Town government. Even though we advertise Town meetings on Verizon Ch.19, our website, in the monthly newsletter and with posted notices, only 5—10 citizens attend the meetings on a regular basis. An even greater problem is the lack of interest in running for and holding office. These issues are not unique to the Town and we need to come up with a solution to ensure continuity of operations.

Our current Town Charter dates from 1965 and, over the years, several amendments have been made. The charter provides for a three member Board of Commissioners elected every two years in January. The Commissioners select one of them to be President of the Board of Commissioners. Under the Charter, the president is not only the head of the legislative branch of government but is also the head of the executive branch, as Chief Executive Officer and Chief Administrative Officer. The Charter assigns substantial power to the President as head of the executive branch. Under other municipal structures, the President would be considered a "strong mayor".

Would a change in our form of government increase interest in holding office? What do you think can be done to increase citizen's participation?

MML 2010 CONVENTION REVIEW
by M. David Williams / Town Clerk

This year, both President Sonnett and I had the distinct pleasure of attending the Maryland Municipal League (MML) 2010 Annual Convention in Ocean City, Maryland, June 27th—30th.

The 4-day event was packed with meetings, workshops and opportunities for networking and proved to be well worth the time.



Above: David Williams and Steve Sonnett attend a reception for Prince George's County officials.

At left: George P. Failla, Deputy Secretary of the MD Department of Disabilities and President Steve Sonnett at the MML Inaugural Dinner.



Together (and separately) we covered the following workshops: *Consensus and Team Building*; *Ethics*; *Creating a Successful Volunteer Program*; *Employment Issues*; *Mutual Aid Agreements*; *Layoffs, Furloughs & Other Personnel Related Money Saving Measures*; *Emergency Management Preparedness: Will Your Town Be Ready When Disaster Strikes?*; *Open Meetings*; *Municipal Budgeting* and *Intergovernmental Collaboration (the I-Net)*.

These workshops provided credits towards my CMC designation (as a Certified Municipal Clerk) and for President Sonnett towards his certificate from the *Academy for Excellence in Local Governance* (a University of Maryland certificate program).

Besides the workshops, I attended the Municipal Clerks Association Quarterly Meeting and Luncheon, while President Sonnett attended the 'Mayors Only' Forum and Luncheon.

We also attended an evening reception where we had the opportunity to meet Prince George's County Council Members and other municipal officials. And, we both enjoyed the Inaugural Dinner and program which included remarks from Governor Martin O'Malley and Lt. Governor Anthony Brown.

Purchasing and Contracts Charter Amendment Discussion on the July 13th Town Meeting Agenda

Section 82-56 of the Town's Charter dealing with purchasing and contracting was adopted in 1965. This section was adopted word for word from the State passed model municipal charter, Maryland Code Article 23 B. The model municipal charter of the Maryland Code has since been repealed. The Town's current Section 82-56 is awkwardly worded, does not provide for the full range of competitive purchasing options and is unduly restrictive. For example, purchases for supplies, materials, equipment and construction of public improvements and contractual services over \$1,000 must be done by sealed bid.

A review of the purchasing and contracts provisions of other municipalities, supplied by the Maryland Municipal League, shows a wide diversity in municipal Charter purchasing and contracts provisions. At one end of the spectrum, the charter merely states that the Board shall set forth the rules and regulations for purchasing and contracting by ordinance. At the other end of the spectrum, the Charter provisions spell out in detail (over two pages) the rules and regulations for purchasing and contracting. Both approaches have their advantages and disadvantages that will be discussed at the July Town meeting. After we decide on the Charter revision, we will need to address revising our current purchasing and contracts ordinance.

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UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

TOWN MEETING: Tuesday, July 13th, 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

WORK SESSION: Tuesday, July 27th, 9:15 a.m. at the Town Hall.

POLICE REPORT

JUNE 2010

Town Citations: 99
State Citations: 67



In-Town Incidents:	1 Vandalism
1 Theft	Out-of-Town Incidents:
1 Auto Theft	3 Assault
3 Property Damage	25 Larceny
1 Breaking & Entering	8 Stolen Vehicle
7 Vehicle Impound	2 Robberies
1 Warrant Service	1 Vandalism

All in-Town incidents were in the downtown area and not in the residential areas.